

Addendum

Reconciling Determinism and Meaning in The Relative Framework

By Dean Tyldesley

Some questions emerge not from opposition, but from reflection, the kind that arises when two parts of a system, developed independently, seem to speak past one another:

“If choice is an illusion, as claimed in the reactive model of consciousness, how can meaning, which in earlier work is described as a product of negotiation between self and world, hold any ground?”

At first glance, this seems to challenge the coherence of the framework. However, on closer inspection, it reveals a layered compatibility between the experience of meaning and the deterministic structures that underlie conscious activity.

To clarify:

The “Illusion Of Choice” argues that consciousness functions as a reactive interface. Awareness does not precede action but follows it, narrating causally predetermined processes as though they were chosen. In this model, the self is not a freely acting agent but a constructed narrative generated by reactive patterning and environmental conditioning.

The “Relativity Of Life’s Meaning” outlines meaning as relational and emergent, arising from the dynamic interaction between internal structure and external condition. This interaction was framed as a kind of negotiation, where perceived choice plays a role in constructing orientation and value.

The tension, then, lies in the apparent contradiction between the illusion of agency and the genuine experience of negotiating meaning. But the resolution becomes clear when we reframe what "negotiation" entails within a deterministic model.

Meaning does not depend on metaphysical freedom. It depends on the system's ability to simulate agency, to present decisions, actions, and consequences in a form that is coherent to the subject. The illusion of choice plays a central role here, not as a deception, but as a functional mechanism.

In a deterministic system complex enough to produce a self-model, the experience of choosing is a necessary part of that self's narrative structure. The subject experiences itself as making decisions, and this experience organizes the relationship between actions and consequences. This organization produces continuity, coherence, and structured relation, the hallmarks of meaning.

We do not create meaning as autonomous agents, but as systems that interpret causality through the lens of a simulated narrative. The feeling of authorship, though illusory, allows us to interpret our lives as meaningful trajectories.

Therefore, the contradiction dissolves through differentiation of levels:

- * At the ontological level, we are deterministic organisms.
- * At the experiential level, we interpret our actions as chosen.
- * At the functional level, this interpretive structure enables coherence, orientation, and value.

Meaning arises not in spite of determinism but through it, via the processes that simulate reflective agency and allow the system to engage in interpretive integration.

Thus, the position on the "Relativity Of life's Meaning" and on the "Illusion Of Choice" are not in opposition. They reflect different aspects

of the same cognitive architecture, one that constructs a sense of value through structured, causally grounded experience.

The illusion of choice, far from negating meaning, is the condition that makes the experience of meaning possible within a deterministic environment.

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